Affective Rhetoric and the Cultural Politics of Determinate Negation[1]

The abandoned city. The drowned nation. The unwanted guest. The feared race. The oppressive democracy. The ruthless freedom. The vile law. The risks of justice. The unmanaged change. The unpredicted revolution. The unimaginable end.

Nick Mansfield, "There is a Spectre Haunting…"

Negative universal history

Dipesh Chakrabarty's analysis of the literature on climate change leads him to develop four theses reanimating the discipline of history for the environmental humanities. Each individual thesis reframes the [dis]continuity of human experience within a new timeframe of historical understanding; together the four demand self-reflection as a species of geological agency (Chakrabarty). While there can be no phenomenology of humans as a species over the course of our history on the planet, Chakrabarty's sense of the need for a "negative universal history" evoking "a shared sense of catastrophe" situates, at the very least, the problem of climate change within an affective and collective experience of a shared world:

> It is not a Hegelian universal arising dialectically out of the moment of history, or a universal of capital brought forth by the present crisis… Yet climate change poses for us a question of human collectivity, an us, pointing to a figure of the universal that escapes our capacity to experience the world. It is more like a universal that arises from a shared sense of catastrophe. It calls for a global approach to politics without the myth of global identity, for, unlike a Hegelian universal, it cannot subsume particularities. (222)

Specific emotions that relate to change, environmental pressures and toxic global capital are not disclosed; however, Chakrabarty demonstrates an understanding of the generic emotional canvas to our contemporary crises; "moods of anxiety and concern" about the finitude of our species and our shared destiny affect our sense of community, this "us"; how our experience of the "now" is one saturated with disparate and conflicting responses to the planetary crisis that disrupts any flat, universal "us." Ultimately, he argues, our "present" disconnects the future from the past by placing the future beyond the grasp of our historical sensibility (197). Developed hypothetical attitudes towards the normative contexts of our life-worlds are one form of determinate negation—putting at some distance that which is given to us—which leads to self-conscious beings that are recognized by others. The need for empathy in our moment is telling; however, we have entered an unprecedented noir space placing extreme pressure on our representational capacities and impacting on our sense of who "we" are.

Self-regard

The notion of the universal raised by Chakrabarty necessarily raises the question of the human in relation to the universe, as a gnat is to a volcano. Rumination on the universal has the potential to negate our almighty sense of self-regard by considering the human as a particularity of a speck in the universe as physically construed. The sensibility of humans on the brink of the Anthropocene is one alert to both the speed by which human society changes and the comparatively slower timescales of evolutionary and geological change. Matching geological time and the chronology of human histories is a difficult project. Alert to this very difficulty, this article implicitly enters into two geo-temporalities to think about the use of collective pronouns in our moment of history: the millions of years' process by which nature has favoured hydrocarbon bonds of plants and animals for storage of solar energy, which have been exploited rapaciously over

three industrial centuries by human cultural evolution; and, the thousands of years by which the promise of nuclear energy now has to be amortized against future harm management within a broader framework than civilian risk/ benefit analysis. These temporalities are taken to the question of representation in the Anthropocene in a conclusory section, which refers back to a subplot with which the article opens: the military aspect to nuclear power.

Fig. 1. Stop Trident CND Demo. 2016. Photograph. *Flickr: David Holt*. Web. 9 May, 2017.

Political geology

The "us" in time is subject to modulation. Our relation to the environment is not timeless. Particular moments in culture speak to discrete events in planetary history: nuclear testing in the 1940s is one case in point. Our interactive relation to the environment viewed within a geology of mankind (Crutzen "Geology of Mankind") can discern the impacts of our actions and assess the potential for negating these actions. However, if our desire for freedom mitigates progressive projects for planetary futures that require the negation of the original negation of pro-environmental behaviour, then our pursuit for post-industrial desire will make us prisoners: prisoners of climate mortgaged to a future hailing us into geological agency.

In this context, Chakrabarty promotes the need for and capacity of reason to address these problems. This argument is made with some qualification.

> There is one consideration though that qualifies this optimism about the role of reason and that has to do with the most common shape that freedom takes in human societies: politics. Politics has never been based on reason alone. And politics in the age of the masses and in a world already complicated by sharp inequalities between and inside nations is something no one can control. (211)

I examine a particular moment in British politics where interconnections to European and Western politics of the last century are reviewed and written anew. Here, the

conflict between historical contingency with respect to nuclear arms and nuclear energy implicitly meet with a deterministic view of our environment while rhetoric is hooked on an archaic discourse re-energized for political advantage.

Nuclear is catastrophic for the planet. Politicians seem aware that in our historical moment we need collective self-recognition as a species of responsible agents, which neither veils the logic of imperial domination nor understates the interdependency of species, the interdependency of mind and nature. What appears to be difficult within politics and political speech writing is the need to address the imaginative construction of a larger narrative arc than we are used to, as required by the question of nuclear arms and power; furthermore, any invoked "us" cannot remain disconnected from environmental justice as it has been on the agenda and in the public's imagination for too long. While warped and made toxic since the logic of inequality within capitalism extended into and was amplified by the Great Acceleration, such narratives of the "we" will help to negate forces that have largely disturbed parametric conditions for human existence. The historical corollary to the expansive narrative arc so desperately required right now is the spirit of thinking that comes from openness to deep time, which for Chakrabarty does not have any "intrinsic connection to the logics of capitalist, nationalist, or socialist identities" (217); thus, it enables us to focus on the particular without enfolding a politics of community that is narrowly human.

Dialectics

Chakrabarty leads from the problems of speaking of either the "universal" or of "history"—certainly within the confines of the humanities and most specifically literary studies concerned with "world literature" as understood by Vázquez-Arroyo. For political exactitude, these keywords are too tainted with Eurocentrist, teleological, totalizing conceits that come from within: "a certain form of historicism that always privileges the European path of development as normative, and thus is complicit with political and epistemic imperialism" (Vázquez-Arroyo 451). The dialectic of the universal and the particular as articulated by the Frankfurt School informs the idea of "negative universal history" that Chakrabarty's theses lead up to: "a narrative category to apprehend the complexities of the historical trends that have shaped the emergence of postcolonialism as a historical condition" (Vázquez-Arroyo 452). Can the same category apprehend the trends that have shaped our understanding of nuclear weapons within contemporary British politics?; following this, can the category apprehend the trends that shape our thoughts of nuclear energy within a global climate change context?

We are learning from postcolonial studies. The discipline of world literature requires an expansive and loose imaginary that can orbit the texts that speak to universal values while remaining alert to discrete flowering morphological variations. For Vázquez-Arroyo, it follows that the study of world literature sensitive to this dynamic offers "the possibility of shared planetary values that signal to a concrete place, the planet: an uncanny locus that mediates our particular, local inhabiting of place and our macro sense of the world" (452) The haunting presence of planetary boundaries/ conditions for life that seem to escape our experience, is also a locus, "in which the universal, in the ambiguity denoted by its real, fictive and ideal connotations, consistently lurks" (453). Vázquez-Arroyo argues that temporal and spatial differentiations in our earthbound expressions of being human can be "mapped out" by means of the dialectic of universal and particular: "a critical mapping that our current planetary predicament of power—mediated by neoliberal capitalist imperatives, global asymmetries of power and status, and the threat of ecological catastrophe—invites more so than ever before." Wishing to avoid rendering "the particular into a particularity of the universal" as in Hegel,

Vázquez-Arroyo points to an awareness of "a transnational, or international form of history (*Geschichte*) that could be enriched by its encounters with other local or national histories" (454).

Rhetoric

Rather than raise the question of ecological limits to capitalism, this article understands the climate change crisis as a phenomenon that will last longer than capitalism; one where the rapid destruction of species is related to both nuclear war and nuclear energy for they both are mistaken choices impacting on our global footprint now and far into the future. My analysis of political debate in the UK during the summer of 2016 demonstrates a mode of immanent criticism that attempts to wrest truth from ideology by positioning explanation and interpretation in a locally historicised appeal to non-identity with climate science. My approach is to look at the compression of two highly complex issues within an unprecedented moment in British politics that relies upon the rhetorical techniques of power struggles that are contained within parliamentary protocols. Here, I recover unities and discontinuities across events in this period and throughout history to both examine the non-identity between the particular and the universal as a major trope in parliamentary rhetoric, and to seek out the use of determinate negation, especially when it has bearing on the advancing of climate-related policies. Ultimately, I keep close to particular nuances and their very recent contexts in my analysis of speeches in the House of Lords to apprehend these concepts in their oblique and ambivalent historical articulations. In conclusion, I move tentatively outwards to the universal by gesturing to the moment of truth in reified concepts, seeking to pry them open in their non-identity with art objects of the Anthropocene.

Airstrip one: London, July 18, 2016

"What a glorious day to scrap Trident" one placard reads. "NHS not Trident" reads another (Bullen; Gruce; "Thousands hit the streets"). At Millbank Pier, a few minutes' walk from the crowds of protestors gathered here outside Westminster Palace, the sun beats down on the rising river Thames echoing the cowering of Poseidon and Shiva. Their weapon, said to have power over the ocean, is under intense critical review backlit by heated public debate and heightened emotional decrying at a tumultuous time of unpredictability in British politics. This scene, in an Inner London Borough, is composed three weeks after the referendum on European Union membership; and two weeks after the second reading of The Armed Forces Deployment (Royal Prerogative) Bill, the day before the publication of the results of The Iraq Inquiry.[2]

Framing the Stop Trident Demonstration on the open green area of Parliament Square is the church of St Margaret, Westminster Abbey to the south[3]; the appallingly named Supreme Court of the United Kingdom[4] that assumes the judicial functions of the House of Lords to the west, and Whitehall to the north. But the energy of the people out on a short patch of grass in the capital city on this glorious summer day is focused towards the Houses of Parliament to the east. Energy? Outrage. The same joyous outrage that descended on London on February 27th in the largest anti-nuclear march in a generation ("Trident Rally Is Britain's Biggest"; Fig. 1, above). Outrage at the unjustified expenditure of billions of pounds on a weapons system that polarises opinion—for some it can never be used; for others it is always in use—while an extension to austerity without mandate manifesting in cuts to hospitals, local authorities, and education severely impacts on the cultural fabric of British society with the flat affect of the bluntest force easily commingling with the fascist aesthetic of Trident. Crusaders for peace showing their strength under a vibrant Westminster sky set against the potential renewal of Britain's nuclear submarine system to be debated in parliament this evening[5]

cast a larger crowd in Parliament Square than that of the central lobby.[6] Democracy remains under a spotlight of its own making, but can this event be reduced to an object of human sense making (see Hynes and Sharpe's "Affect: An Unworkable Concept"), or are "we" even unable to apprehend the "us" in ourselves right now?

War crimes

The debate on Britain's—and by extension Europe's—future brought together an ecology of political issues from the European single market to membership of NATO. Consequently, July was marked by the resignation of Prime Minister David Cameron for the largest political miscalculation this century to date—the UK European Union membership referendum—and the audacity of unrepentant former Prime Minister Tony Blair refusing to apologise for the unjustified case for war in Iraq. The latter, taking Blair a step closer to prosecution before the International Criminal Court (ICC) for aggression not permitted under UN charters, or for crimes against humanity (Rozenberg). The former, opening up debate and leadership challenges in the two main political parties, which was mediated to the public as a series of careerists presenting an alternative version of mutually assured destruction of political reputations. Time might invite us to ask: how many of these politicians stuck to their guns? (Hughes; Cowburn).

In the British imagination, events further polarized the two main political parties upon ideological lines—the recent general election rhetoric of austerity as economic necessity/ austerity as political choice temporarily switched to Cold War mode. The subject of a continuous at-sea nuclear deterrent urging former Foreign Secretary and new leader of the Conservative and Unionist Party, Theresa May, to exclaim on her fourth day of office that she would "press the button" (McSmith). Terror and virtue. The leader of the Labour Party, Jeremy Corbyn, articulated his longstanding anti-nuclear position in more diplomatic terms with broader context: "You don't achieve peace by planning for war, grabbing resources and not respecting each other's human rights" ("Jeremy Corbyn and Nicola Sturgeon Condemn").[7] The "we" of the UK at this point was all at sea.

Finger on the button

The international aspect to the UK debate is multiple. Beyond Europe, May's words echo the media soundbites of US Presidential Nominees, Hilary Clinton and Donald Trump; their criticism of each other's character during a hypothetical nuclear threat infused by the rhetorical cult of personality and the closing of the American mind. Turned inward and toxic on the issues of personal temperament, the metaphor for the complex apparatus and a litmus test for trust invokes the problem of compromise between homeland security and international diplomacy, mobilized by Clinton and Trump to play crudely on the emotions and deepest motivations of the American electorate. Back in the UK in the last few days of July, British ministers decide to conduct a fresh review into Hinkley Point C, an GBP18bn project and the first new nuclear power station for a generation. The decision to build or not to build is deferred until Autumn at the earliest; consequently putting out the noses of French developers and investors from China ("Government Seeks to Reassure Investors"). Our nuclear stance, on weapons and on energy, centrally in the spotlight for the first time in decades as Westminster's chaos echoes around the globe and descends into the sound and fury of tales told by idiots.

Temperature of a nation

An insight into how our cultural understanding of climate change informs our outlook on justice can be gleaned by reviewing the EU Referendum debate, House of Lords, 6 July, and projecting some of the perspectives in this debate onto Trident renewal discourse and concerns regarding the proposal of the new nuclear power station at Hinkley Point C.

Fig. 2. Baroness Kramer, BBC Parliament 2016. Screen capture (copyright BBC).

Baronness Kidron provides some of the material here. She follows Baroness Kramer's sophisticated understanding of the incredible impact of "Brexit" on the London financial services, "the heart of our economic viability as a nation" exemplified by the city's clearing prowess: "London cleared nearly 50% of global interest rates… and nearly 40% of global foreign currency transactions" – trillions of dollars in trading volumes.[8] The light shifts from the investments exchange that is a [stand in] for access to the European single market, and by extension, a riposte to careless "Brexit" talk about cutting immigration, which [is a stand in] for freedom of movement within the EU.

Access to the market is conditional on the freedom of the movement of labour. Baroness Kidron negates Kramer's dollar figure discourse of a united sector of London in her hypothetical attitude to the normative deification of the market, speaking more sensitively to the underlying causes behind the referendum vote. For Kidron, Brexit or the failure to mobilize a "Remain" imaginary, is an expression of an already divided country; empathising with communities that have "already paid the price of a global market place" in the "terminal decline" of resource-based industries and manufacturing alongside the decline in jobs and pensions, Kidron understands these communities and their concerns about economic migrancy to the UK (Fig. 2, above). These particular communities represent a working class across continental Europe composed of multiple ethnicities both deracinated and "at home"; in the UK they are "worryingly free" of political representation and have been the "collateral damage" of austerity policies failing to address the injustices of the global financial crisis.

Meltdown

Kidron understands the scale of the problem: cuts have "denuded whole regions of an ecosystem that allowed for a level of self–determination" (UK Parliament, "Outcome of the European Union Referendum").

> Union remains an ideal worth fighting for. It provides us with ballast against conflict, trading partners, cultural exchange, an enlightened social project and, in a global world, the collective voice of half a billion people on any

> subject from climate change to data protection. But if Europe refuses to engage with communities that globalisation and nation states have left behind, that ideal is tainted, not only here but right across Europe.

Chakrabarty's qualified universal seems to be in view here in Kidron's meaning by the word "us". Kennedy of the Shaws develops this meaning. The result of the referendum "a revolt against global capitalism and neo-liberal economics" was an expression, Kennedy argues, of disdain:

> A majority of people showed their disdain for politicians who had embraced an economics that caused the 2008 financial meltdown, forced austerity upon them, gave them stagnant working-class wages, increased immigration, denied them decent housing, made them wait longer to see doctors, made them have difficulty in getting their children into schools, and allowed tax havens and tax-fiddling for the rich (*Outcome of the European Union Referendum)*.

The Brexit campaigns exploited people's emotions; Kidron and Kennedy urge us to understand people's emotions. Their attempt to negate a new toxic norm of fear articulates a distrust of the other by clarifying how reactionary politics in the UK is clearly overlooking the advantages for the present generations in terms of labour laws (rights for part-time workers and agency workers, holiday leave, collective redundancy, maternity and paternity leave, equal pay, antidiscrimination) alongside "environmental protections and climate change targets" provided by EU membership. It is incredible that these issues were lost in the referendum debate when the condition of market entry is freedom of movement. Does this mean that the determinate negation of the Brexiteers belies a convincing contrast with other political situations that are determined in ways differently to ours?

Abraham Lincoln

What is past is prologue. There is a statue on Parliament Square, beside the anti-nuclear protestors that can help us. Abraham Lincoln, by Augustus Saint-Gaudens (1920).[9] Lincoln's contribution to emancipation in the new world is focused on the free movement of labour. Slavery did not allow for this. "Brexit" will not allow for this. Labour rights are the reason his statue is here. And this reason informs the plaque on his statue in Lincoln Square, Manchester, by George Gray Bernard (1917)—originally commissioned to commemorate one hundred years of unbroken peace between Britain and America in Parliament Square (Fig. 3, below); it proved too controversial for London in 1914. It is equally controversial in the contemporary context.

Fig. 3. Abraham Lincoln Statue. Photograph. Mike Peel, 2010.

Bernard's statue refers to British empathy for Americans, from the President, to the civil war soldiers, ordinary workingmen and workingwomen, and black slaves. In the National Archives in Washington D.C. there are two letters from Abraham Lincoln to the people of England: 19th January 1863 "The President of the United States to the working men of Manchester" and 2nd February 1863 "The President of the United States to the working men of London". Both letters embody the original transatlantic fellow feeling of these two nations, which unites people across their different but connected struggles. While the Confederate flag was raised on the banks of the Mersey in celebration of slave cotton and its contribution to the economy of the north west of England, the working people of Manchester wrote to Lincoln after a meeting in the Free Trade Hall to support the President in his campaign of free movement of labour: denying any imports of cotton from the slave colonies and in-doing-so denying themselves a livelihood.[10] For Lincoln, this politically upright moral stoicism and negation of imperial selfishness was an act of "sublime Christian heroism."[11]

Why was a huge empathic urge like that of the working people of Britain in the nineteenth century denied its moment when it was most needed during July 2016? What was different about the fellow feeling of Brexiteers to those expressed by the people of Manchester? Did the result of the referendum mark a limit case in British social history: the right's decades-long narrative of a failing Europe Union coming back to bite us all on the bottom as incompetent pro-European campaigning was subsumed by the rollout of "project fear"?[12] We knew at the time that this project would be regarded as one that ultimately manipulated uncertainty and anxiety, fuelling a politics of fear rather than articulating emotional literacy for people's concerns while highlighting complex policy-based responses to the causes (or roots) of those emotions. And yet while the referendum debate failed to demonstrate sensitive understanding of the emotional lives

of the electorate, we failed to think positively about constructing a narrative of something other than the worst-case scenario. "We" were united through failure.

City of dreadful night

July 18. Forty-eight years and seventeen days after the signing of the United Nations treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, five hours of discussion on the fate of one percent of the 17,000 nuclear weapons in the world begins in Westminster with a sixty-second outburst on the threat of terrorism in Europe ("Trident"). Terror as a social organising principle. The Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, dispassionately declares her willing to authorise a strike that could kill 100,000 people two weeks and five days ahead of the formal plenary meetings of UN open-ended working group taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament ("Taking Forward Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament Negotiations").

Despite public sector net borrowing running at GBP1604 billions in July ("Commentary on the Public Sector Finances Release"), and while there are tens of thousands of jobs at risk in the defence industrial base, money for fascist aesthetics is always easy to find. NHS hospitals and other providers published their deficit by $2.45bn for the second successive year ("NHS Providers Working Hard").

Understandably in this context, supporters of public services were angered at GBP8bn tax cuts in last budget (Johnson). Five times this outrage amongst the crowd outside parliament, perhaps, with lowest estimates for Trident renewal taking GBP41bn from the public purse—0.2% of government spending representing six percent of the defence budget? The night ends with a vote for renewal of Trident in the House of Commons: 472 to 117, a majority of 355 MPs (Mason and Asthana; "Trident renewal: Only one Scottish MP votes "). But of course the reckoning must include more than figures.

Terror, virtue, fear

With emotions running high in the wake of the terrorist attacks in Nice on Bastille Day, July 14, and the beginnings of an attempted military coup in Turkey on the following day, Teresa May sought to underline the renewal of Trident as an "insurance policy" and a "necessity" not only in the context of an increased threat of nuclear aggression against the UK from within NATO (expansionist Russia) and those nation states acquiring arms illegally, but also from future threats that we cannot imagine. While the spiralling cost of the total renewal package was not made clear to MPs during the debate, the Prime Minister's twitter-friendly inflections of patriotic force set to invoke by contrast "an act of gross irresponsibility" and a "dereliction of our duty" were Britain to lose its ability to meet those ill-defined and vague threats had the country disarmed (UK Parliament, "UK's Nuclear Deterrent"). Fear and virtue. Expect more of this.

Moreover, for May, the moment presents an opportunity to connect this particular nuclear stance to a larger idea. The commitment to multilateralism incorporates the need to shun the "virtue" of unilateralism, negating nothing but "misplaced idealism" (Foster). The responsibility of the 188 UN members signed up to the 1968 treaty is articulated in article six, as follows ("List of Parties to the Treaty ") :

> Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control ("Treaty on Non-Proliferation").

The non-identity of May's particular to this parliament of nations (a qualified universal) was clarified in a bid to respond to the responsibility of a state with declared nuclear arms and a signatory to the NPT. In her early scenes at the despatch box, Britain's new Prime Minister was seen to raise the logic of double negatives without invoking high moral standards.
By contrast, the case for nuclear disarmament made by the Leader of the Opposition, Jeremy Corbyn, kept close to the rhetorical power of numbers while turning a narrow definition of security towards the promise of a nuclear-free world:

> We are debating not a nuclear deterrent but our continued possession of weapons of mass destruction. We are discussing eight missiles and 40 warheads, with each warhead believed to be eight times as powerful as the atomic bomb that killed 140,000 people in Hiroshima in 1945. We are talking about 40 warheads, each one with a capacity to kill more than 1 million people (UK Parliament, "UK's Nuclear Deterrent).

Anti-war and anti-austerity: two issues that caught the public imagination and placed Corbyn as the leader of the Labour party in the shocking summer of 2015, and provided the country with the largest and fastest growing political party in the history of UK politics (Untermeyer). The opportunity to redefine socialism, particularly in an international context, was something still clearly on the agenda one year later:

> I do not believe that the threat of mass murder is a legitimate way to go about dealing with international relations.

Corbyn, once seen as a figure marginalised by his principles, became a representative of politics done differently almost overnight owing to his ability to bring people together as self-conscious beings with dignity recognizing these qualities in others. But other dark forces prevail.

Corbyn's words were spoken while the party membership rose by 150,000 people in the same week; they carry conviction beyond the individual speaking; they make sense to activists and campaigners that understand "nuclear-free world" as one in which there are no renewals or upgrades to arms that commit each state to a logic of distrust and bankruptcy. This negation of the NATO norm brings other issues into relief: "tackling climate change" Corbyn continues, "will only be effective if social justice is at the heart of the solutions we propose" (Corbyn). In bringing the environmental context into relief, the moral dimension to Corbyn's outlook invites us to examine our lives in relationship with others and its expansive reasoning of the "we" sets his agenda against the grain of previous UK leaders and those with their fingers hovering over the metaphoric button.

Winston Churchill
The 1925 Geneva Protocol outlaws the use of poisonous gas ("Protocol for the Prohibition"); however, on 6 July 1944 it did not stop former UK Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, asking for a "cold-blooded calculation" on its use:

> It is absurd to consider morality on this topic when everybody used it [gas] in the last war without a word of complaint from the moralists or the Church. On the other hand, in the last war the bombing of open cities was regarded as forbidden. Now everybody does it as a matter of course. It is simply a question of fashion changing as she does between long and short skirts for women (Weber).

Churchill made clear to his Chief of Staff, General Hastings Ismay, that he wished the idea of "drench[ing] the cities of the Rhur" to be studied in a calculated way, and not by "psalm-singing uniformed defeatists." Had Churchill been allowed to follow such a strategy, British Air Force resources would not have made such a hideous impact on Germany's cities and industries. Furthermore, to refer to an animal's thermophysiology, in this manner, is a decisive step to remove emotion or pity. However, the callous leap into conceptual abstraction mistakingly invokes science: to be "cold-blooded" is to demonstrate the ability to keep body temperature within a boundary when the temperature of the environment is very different. In this case, through the lens of history, Churchill's choice of phrase is less metaphorical and more literal, placing a boundary around one's reasoning while evaluating a misguided military strategy to keep at bay one's instinctively humane emotions. Churchill's reputation might now look better had he understood thermoconformity: an organism adopting the surrounding temperature as its body temperature. This process suggests a better fit into a "we" where world comes to mind and self-centred power is relinquished for attunement to body and environment.

Postscript: On 4 July 1945, Washington hosted the Combined Policy Committee Meeting wherein the UK gave its formal consent to the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The meeting was followed in September in New York with the two parties agreeing to "indefinite bilateral collaboration on both military and commercial applications of nuclear energy" and despite the advances of Nobel prize holder Niels Bohr during consultation throughout this period, Churchill and Roosevelt decided to keep the world ignorant of their new weapon until it was leashed; effectively keeping Russia out of the picture and triggering the cold war (Hymans).

Bodily metaphor

The recourse to bodily metaphor while sidestepping ethical dilemmas was repeated by Baroness Buscombe on 13 July, seven days and 72 years after Churchill's memorandum to Ismay, and four days after the 2016 Warsaw Summit of NATO:

> As a member of the Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy, I confirm its full support for the deterrent element of SDSR [Strategic Defence and Security Review] 2015. It is right that the SDSR makes clear that we are committed to maintaining the minimum amount of destructive power needed to deter an aggressor, to stress the need to avoid vulnerability, and to keep our nuclear posture under constant review in the light of the international security environment and the actions of potential adversaries.

Buscombe is failing to hold her language against the force of American nuclear policy rhetoric (i.e. "posture") while speaking to "our now fragile, very fragile relationship with Russia" ("Nuclear Posture Review"). Clear evidence of cold war thinking remobilised, almost supercharged, in this moment of crisis by the language of protection from financial loss. What has become of "us" in this addiction to economics?

Major Tom's a junkie

Baroness Falkner of Margravine, Lord King of Bridgewater, and Lord West of Spithead all spoke of Trident as an "insurance policy" during the debate; with West informing the house that the policy will "cost" as little as "0.13% of GDP". Use of terms and conventions peculiar to mathematics and the discourse of market economics set the tone for the interaction between speaker, house and public with alluring fiscal fortitude that seemed inescapable. However, Buscombe's mode of address could not reach across to contemporary ethics as its stance ran the gauntlet of over-determined economic

addiction. While speaking to the house at large, and no one directly, Falkner asks a specific question to "the Minister":[13]

> I ask my noble friend… whether it is not now time to seriously and sensibly revisit the current DfID target of 0.7% of gross national income—particularly in the light of the short-to-medium term fragility of our economy post-Brexit—and transfer some of that budget to defence?

This question does not negate but overlooks Lord Arbuthnot of Edrom's distaste for imprecise language use, expressed only one quarter of an hour before Buscombe's gloss indicating a contagious language game generating a political vacuum that Arbuthnot was keen to dispel. While Buscombe made it clear that "each generation" needs to be educated on "what Trident really means", Arbuthnot summoned an image of the protestors outside before he ripped through the semantic contagion embodying the toxic sprawl of the deified market narrative ("Pope Francis Slams Our Economic System").

> The point of a nuclear deterrent is that if they bomb us, we will bomb them. That is unlike any insurance policy I have ever come across. If someone burns down my house, I do not go and burn down theirs. This nuclear deterrent is rather more like a booby trap: if they bomb us, something very nasty will go off in their back yard. It relies on the principle of retaliation. In law—long ago, I used to practise [sic] law—retaliation, as such, is illegal. I suppose that once we get to the point of nuclear exchange, the question of what is and is not legal will become of little interest in people's minds.

Arbuthnot's wisdom is tonic to the debate that reached a low point on the empathy scale when Buscombe paraphrased Lord Vinson's response to the NATO meeting on July 11: stating that the UK defence budget is "strapped for cash" whilst it is "simultaneously giving substantial aid to support the economies and welfare of countries such as Poland and Finland." What might be taken for a lack of empathy or inability to identify Britain with Europe, might come from (mis)understanding the common good, a term of art referring to what is beneficial for all or most members of a union: here, Europe, within the context of the vast amount of money spent deploying soldiers to helping refugees or responding to unexpected disasters, is lowered in an imagined priority list, and our relationship to it is subsequently devalued. Budgetary silos simply do not assist in the development of a country's outlook.[14] Balance sheet columns are less sophisticated than an abacus of "we". But does this all not miss a point: our nuclear stance is one composed of our fictions of power? Trident, for example, is a representational system, the parts of which act together to project our national character.

Rowing in the opposite direction

28 July. After ten years of debate, the board of the largely French state-owned energy company, Électricité de France (EDF), approve the development of a new nuclear reactor at Hinkley Point C, Somerset (Walker). 10 votes for, 7 against ("EDF Board Votes"). A green light reminding us this is not the period in history for a two-thirds majority (Ashcroft). Two hours after EDF announces its board approval, Teresa May's staff intervene: "The government will now consider carefully all the component parts of this project and make its decision in the early autumn" ("Hinkley gets one answer"). The UK chief executive learns of the developments on the Internet; Cantonese pork crackling, Somerset Brie and fresh mackerel ceviche for 150 VIP guests at a celebratory function are put on ice.

Nice business

The project raised concerns inside and outside France where the parity between civilian and military use of nuclear is exemplified without parallel. Following the resignation of EDF's chief financial official earlier in the year, one EDF board member resigned stating that the construction was not only "very risky" but the over-reliance on nuclear would move the company away from its environmental and social programmes (Clercq; "Our Better Energy Ambitions"). Despite the French government buying Euro3bn of new shares, and one third of capital costs are to be met by Chinese investors (including China Nuclear Power Corporation holding a 33% stake in the project), unions are nervous about the financial impact of construction on the heavily indebted firm (Morris and Cook; Kollewe). The EDF workers committee, holding six of the eighteen seats of the EDF board, pushes for a delay (while four British trade unions demand that things go ahead) ("Hinkley") [15] but a Paris court rejects the challenge and upholds the investment decision (Stothard). EDF takes the union to court ("EDF to Take Legal Action").

Sorrow

Who represents whom? Hinkley Point C is estimated to meet 7% of the country's energy needs, powering 6 million homes. It has been advertised as costing GBP18bn. The National Audit Office warns that the cost could be more than GBP30bn ("*Nuclear Power in the Uk")*. The bill we be eventually placed at the British taxpayer who will pay GBP92.50 a megawatt hour for 35 years, owing to government guarantees: twice existing wholesale prices (Ruddick). One is lead to wonder how the nuclear lobby is so influential when wind (offshore and onshore) is cheaper at present (Casson; "Barry Gardiner: Hinkley is not essential") ?

According to Green Hedge Energy UK Limited, the Department of Energy and Climate Change were privy to intelligence on "solar, wind, storage and backup gas" offering the energy sector the same output as Hinkley, "a decade earlier and at least 25% cheaper" ("Hinkley Point Review"). This information was published on 13 July by DECC (Comptroller and Auditor General) ahead of its name change to the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy ("Department of Energy and Climate Change"). If the total cost of development is exactly between 18bn and 30bn, according to Sue Roaf, an expert on low carbon solutions, for an equivalent price "we could put solar hot water and PV [photovoltaic panels and inverters] with battery storage on the same 6m homes and thus taking a quarter of British homes out of fuel poverty for ever ("Hinkley Point Review"). Figures clarifying the "cost" of nuclear energy in terms of economic injustice and the condition of poverty in Britain enter the public domain in the early hours of the occupation of Royal Albert Hall for one night by the BBC Proms; an event giving rise to the positive energy of John Cale and Anna Calvi while covering David Bowie's version of "Sorrow" (Fig. 4, below).[16]

Fig. 4. John Cale and Anna Calvi, David Bowie Prom, BBC Four, 2016. Screen capture (copyright BBC).

Where is the counterpoint to the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority that advertises "providing value for taxpayers' money" as one of its priorities ("Nuclear Decommissioning Authority")? Hinkley Point C simply does not represent that value, or the values of the British people that were sung outside parliament and inside the monarchical institution of Kensington: more intense than sadness, sorrow implies a long-term state. "You never do what you know you ought to."

Fresh doubt

Chinese investment in the illogical UK energy project is part of GBP40bn deal with China overseen by former Prime Minister Cameron (Inman; Farrell and Macalister; Murray). Teresa May appointed a former aid and leadership campaigner, Nick Timothy, to Joint Chief of Staff on July 14. Timothy's contributions to clean energy debates are pointed: critical of Hinkley Point C, he argues that earlier ministers have undertaken a project committed to "selling national interests" to China (Timothy). A split within the Unionist party that echoed the impetus behind the referendum vote was laid bare again.[17] US paranoia over nuclear secrets (Macalister; Ganga) leaked into the Conservative Party and out in the newspapers during July (Hill; "Osborne Rejected Safeguards"), but Timothy was already on this path in October 2015.

Whether these comments are part of an official yet inscrutable foreign policy is hard to say; however, as Jeremy Corbyn has noted, China is "a major economic provider" for North Korea and is thus worth keeping within our midst (Albert). May's approach to Hinkley Point C prompted one British Treasury Minister to threaten to quit his office (O'Neill) and led to strong words from the Chinese ambassador to the UK: Liu Xiaoming's direct response marked the moment in British-Chinese relations in terms of a "crucial historical juncture" (Quinn; Xiaoming). From the perspective of desire for non-proliferation and the pursuit of multilateral disarmament within a determined outlook for a nuclear-free world, "the relationship with China and North Korea," for Corbyn, "is perhaps the key to a way forward in that respect"("Trident"; "Jeremy Corbyn 2016 Speech"). It is correct that the review of Britain's energy provision presents an opportunity for clear and consistent diplomacy and this opportunity to interface and unite is broad. The opportunity to enhance our "we" is particularly broad in that China is making considerable efforts on climate change with renewables

outpacing nuclear despite their ironic dependency on the climate ("In China, Ban Highlights Country's Leadership"; King; DeRosa).

Nuclear-energy-charged-USB-e-cigarette, anyone?

Climate change discourse has been dominated by the ideologies of adaptation and mitigation. The Nuclear debate in the UK in the twenty-first century is driven by the concepts of decarbonisation, security, and affordability. When we are discussing a very difficult proposal for a (dangerous) short-term solution for as little as 7% of our energy needs, one wonders why we cannot speak of reducing those needs by 7%? There have been many forests cleared in order to print literature on climate change solutions when the single solution is solar; the problem is simply a question of taking our "we" to that solution in the speediest and most equitable manner. With that issue to one side, for a while, why so little text in DECC, the House of Lords, or even in the journalism cited above dedicated to behaviour change, to negating our toxic commitments, or changing our economy and industry so that we use less energy? Are we afraid of that word, "less"?

The law of unintended consequences

11 March, 2011. An undersea megathrust earthquake off the Pacific coast of Tōhoku, the fourth largest earthquake since records began shifted the main island of Japan, Honshu, and shifted the earth on its axis by more than 10cm. The 40-metre tsunami waves triggered by the quake flooded over 500km of land, destroyed roads, rail and housing, resulted in the loss of more than 20,000 lives, and caused the largest civilian nuclear accident since the explosion and fire at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant in Pripyat in 1986 which released radioactive particles into the atmosphere above western USSR and Europe: level 7 meltdowns (major accident) ("International; Nuclear and Radiological Event Scale") at three reactors in the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant complex register the longest lasting impacts of the triple catastrophe ("Fukushima-Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant Accident").

While Physicians for Social Responsibility report that 600 square kilometres are too radioactive for human habitation, and radioactive celsium is ubiquitous through the ecosystems of the region, slowly infiltrating the food system (as with the example of 56% of all fish catches off Japan were contaminated with radiation fifteen months after the disaster) (Starr), and radiation is so high robots cannot survive ("Radiation So High at Fukushima"), the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR) reported radiation effects at "low doses" and "no radiation-related deaths or acute diseases" observed among workers and the general public in 2013 ("Sources, Effects and Risks of Ionizing Radiation") . In 2016 the World Health Authority reports that the major challenge "remains the mitigation of the psychological impact of the disaster" ("Fukushima Five Years On"; World Health Organization; University of Hiroshima). More survival narratives that lack the nerve and steel required for the extension of mind and transcendence of *homo economicus* to generate sincere empathy for the more-than-human environment.

Adverse mental health effects and permanent disabilities are incredibly important areas for concern in a progressive redefinition of an inclusive "we". The social impact of disaster, however, should surely resituate the environmental consequences of deploying nuclear power stations in the forefront of our minds – whether they cause an unplanned disaster as with Chernobyl and Fukushima (Fig. 5, below), or inevitably create another disaster – stored nuclear waste?

Godzilla fear (after Fukushima)

George Monbiot believes the real tragedy of Fukushima is not radiation, but it is the impact of an increase in CO2 owing to Japan, Germany and France reneging on nuclear commitments and shifting energy production to coal (Monbiot; Tabuchi).[18] For Clive Hamilton, nuclear is the only possible reliable source if we wished to provide a cup of tea to everyone on the planet (Hamilton). The unpopular argument runs as follows: (i) we currently need 16 terawatts of energy per day: (ii) our energy demand as a species is somewhere between that created by the flow of the world's rivers (6 terawatts) and the heat from the Earth's interior (44 terawatts) (Stacey and Hodgkinson) (iii) coal can provide the power at scale; solar requires considerable land.

Fig. 5. Behind the scenes on the set of Godzilla. Photograph. 1954.

This story seems to miss out on two issues: the sun provides 120,000 terawatts: 10,000 times more than the flow through our industrial civilisation (Morton "The Wordfalls"); as early as 2011, the United Nations Environment Programme clarified that in the European context, at least, hydro and on-shore wind is competitive when compared with fossil fuel and nuclear technologies (McCrone et al.). Who are we kidding?

Scientific measures

We think of fission and technology as soon as we scan the word "nuclear", but we have not forgotten that it had cultural meaning in the twentieth century: a basic unit (Fig. 6, below). Ironic, perhaps, that in this century, the date for nuclear testing in New Mexico (16 July 1945) is the most likely contender to symbolically mark the beginning of a persistent anthropogenic imprint on Earth's systems in confluence with the postmodern. The date will represent a formal boundary marker between the late Holocene and the Anthropocene equating the advent of the Anthropocene boundary with the advent of the nuclear age within a submission to the International Commission of Stratigraphy this

October (Zalasiewicz, et al.). Is it a tragedy that the term "nuclear family" comes into the public domain around the time of the first nuclear testing programme without any collective sense of this foreboding ironic heuristic?

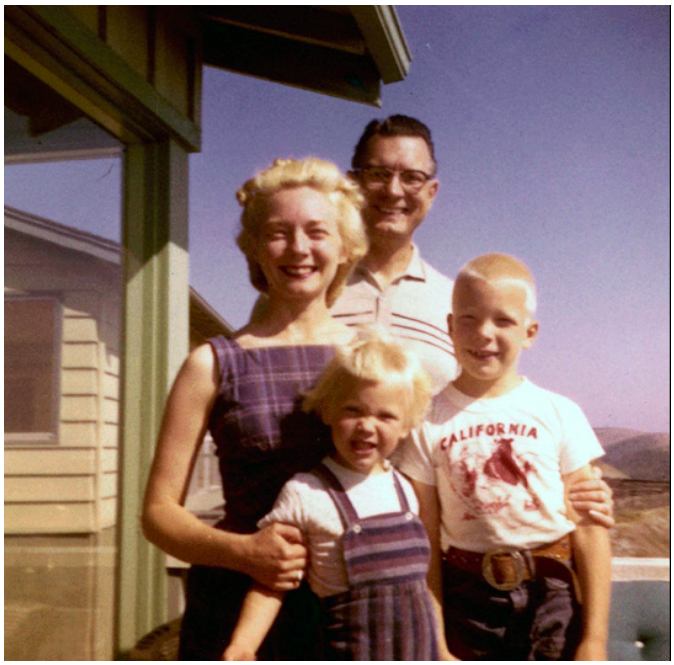

Fig. 6. W. H. Shumard family, Seattle Municipal Archives, circa 1955. Photograph.

Survival opportunities

With our minds attuned to the consequences (planned or unplanned) of our energy decisions we might start to think again about the cost of energy, our use of energy, and the (in)security that energy and its supply chains provide for humans in the short term and the planet in the long term. This more extensive focus on "impact", moreover, might enable us to side step what Gregory Bateson clarified as the "epistemological fallacy" in post-Enlightenment Occidental thought: the incorrect choice of the unit of survival in the bio-taxonomy. To Bateson, contemporary ecological science dismisses "either the family line or the species or subspecies" as, "quite obvious[ly] not the unit of survival in the real biological world" ("Pathologies of Epistemology"). The epistemic turn of the 1830s towards the cell from the organism, and the Darwinian notion of evolution at the genetic level have now been superseded by biological research into evolution within the ecosystem. This new science learns that the correct unit of survival, "organism plus environment", readdresses the epistemological error, includes interaction within the unit, and offers a new series of units or differences: "gene-in-organism, organism-in-environment, eco-system etc." where to destroy one's environment is to destroy one's self. The Darwinian population model and biological genetic model, superseded by Richard Dawkins' genotype plus environment (Dawkins), is modified in Tim Ingold's fusion of biology and anthropology, which "locates the organism or person as a creative agent within a total field of relations whose transformations describe a process of evolution" (Ingold). Nuclear discourse—energy and waste, and arms—requires this view on the total field to measure its practices and markets in light of the creative development of life.[19] Bateson discusses the epistemological fallacy as an epoch subsequent to totemism (empathy with nature driving social organization) and then animism (extension of human mind into nature), as the third phase, "separation": from

the structure within which mind is immanent. Thus, the "eco-mental" system looks at this separation and argues that the evolutionary unit of survival equates identically with mind (Bateson 491-3). To rethink our survival opportunities requires some thinking and feeling that we are undermining at present.

Non-analogue state

For Paul Crutzen and Will Steffen, writing in 2003, Earth is currently operating "in a non-analogue state". The anthropogenic influence on our planet is pronounced to the extent that there is no person or thing seen as comparable to the present mess or future state of things:

> For vertebrate species this has the effect of needing to increase their baseline rate of evolutionary adaption an average of 10,000 fold to keep up with climate change over the century ahead (Loarie, et al.).
>
> For the less mobile of trees and plants to continue to exist in their current baseline temperature this has the effect of needing to move pole-ward at a rate of an average of 1.15mtrs per day to follow the increasing energy gradient from the equator to the poles (Quintero and Wiens).
>
> For calcifying marine life this has the effect of dissolving their external membrane, as the 93% of the excess heat accumulates in the ocean where the transformation from carbon dioxide to carbonic acid is acidifying at the fastest rate in the past 300 million years (Wodak).

Open and complex systems, unable to settle into an equilibrium state register the volatility and dynamism of our suffering at planetary scale (Clark). They also represent the impossibility of representing the unthinkable (see Marder and Tondeur; *Art in the Anthropocene*).

Tempo and mode

Alongside the backward yet easy recourse to coal in an age of fear, the danger of nuclear once represented in abstract terms and placed in extreme contexts is alluringly diluted. In an attempt to promote public understanding of climate change, 4hiroshimas.com speaks directly to the accumulation of heat on the planet.[20] One unfortunate statistic, the heat of the Hiroshima bomb, is deployed to clarify the devastating scale of our planet's climatic plight into terms easier to visualize their material reality than otherwise possible with charts, graphs and symbols. This in turn reduces the historical trauma of Hiroshima to a weak anecdote: we are told, quite straightforwardly, that our earth is warming at the scale of four Hiroshimas per second. Statistics that should be ballast to a structured argument on the need to work through safer energy behaviours and smarter energy production in the context of climate change become redundant and rhetorically impoverished in this mode. Likewise, researchers calculate that nuclear holocaust has a half-life of 22,000 years with no net-effect on the planet, a vituperative glance at crisis allowing critics to write unfeelingly that climate change is far more damaging having suspended the next ice age, already overdue by 100,000 years (Archer).

As Chakrabarty noted, drawing from Naomi Oreskes, we are in agreement about the anthropogenic damage, but our critical project has yet to settle on an agreed "tempo and mode" (Chakrabarty 201; Oreskes). The devastation to the planet from the barbaric act of genocide on August 6 1945 (Wendle) has been transformed by some humanities scholars and scientists into a standard unit for planetary energy imbalance; the unit is used comparatively against mega-events, or hyperobjects (Morton "Hyperobjects"), with

zero affect regarding nuclear's opposition to ecology (and inseparably the nuclear industry's energy and war manifestations) owing to the tempo of the pursuit for a maths-friendly environmental metanarrative. How do we better capture our slow violence on the planet for more astute reckoning?

Questions of representation

The 20km Fukushima Daiichi exclusion zone contains many objects exposed to radiation, including glass from destroyed and abandoned buildings. Trevor Paglen melts irradiated broken glass taken from inside the exclusion zone with Trinitite, the glassy residue of desert sand melted by the first nuclear bomb explosion in Alamgordo, New Mexico on July 16, 1945. Once melted together the new forms of glass are placed back into the exclusion zone only to be viewed by the public at some indeterminate time when the zone restrictions are lifted.

Fig. 7. Trinity Cube. Photograph. Trevor Paglen (by courtesy of the artist and Don't Follow the Wind), 2015.

Trinity Cube (2015; Fig. 7, above) thus represents determinate negation of politically charged space-time compression. This particular fusion of materials negates the gap between America and Japan, and decreates the space between testing and suffering, military research and its consequences, fascist aesthetics and environmental crisis. The cube's attitude to normative concepts of causation and consequence is coloured by Anthropocene heuristics. Not only are viewers invited to consider the material impact of nuclear on the soil of North America; they are placed within a dynamic and open timescape that posits a future beyond our capacity to experience in the Pacific islands (Fig. 8, below). Access to the resultant fusion of glass is dependent upon a thirdspace of security politics that will register the uniqueness of a Japanese sense of dwelling in the present while respecting the past, once the exclusion zone is deemed habitable and safe. The hybrid artefact speaking to a moment in the past leaking into the future demonstrates how our anxiety towards future states is partly based on the inability to visualize them. With significant presence in our cultural imaginary this self-fulfilling norm of non-representation is exponentially polluting our environmental consciousness.

Fig. 8. Trinity Cube, Installation View. Photograph. Trevor Paglen (by courtesy of the artist and Don't Follow the Wind), 2015.

Anthropocene affect

In the world's first cabinet of curiosities designed for the Anthropocene in the Deutsches Museum, Munich (2015-17), Joseph Masco has placed a copy of the 1973 Atomic Energy Commission Film, *Plowshare (*"Anthropocene Project"). This film details the geoengineering efforts of Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory scientists who sought to make the earth profitable by unlocking energy and bringing forth "a wealth of materials where there are vast untapped resources.. to meet the needs of man, needs he can see as he struggles against the geography nature has pitted against him" (Project Plowshare).

Between 1961 and 1973 the project conducted 35 nuclear detonations, creating "a global backlash against the concept of nuclear engineering, particularly from the global south and indigenous communities, marking a successful public counter-mobilization on public health and environmental terms" ("Plowshares Film"; Fig. 9, below), Masco's object speaks directly to an age of consumption and activism. Ironically, the 16mm petrochemical film—an inert object sealed behind glass, a product of the extractive industry and carbon economy—invokes an affective world of involvement, action and violence.

Fig. 9. American Atomic Bomb Tests, 1958-1975. Film. *YouTube: Plowshare Program*. Web. 9 May, 2017.

Moreover, *Plowshare* speaks to a rupture in the collective psyche. Revisiting his adaptation of the sense of *unheimlich* from Sigmund Freud's essay, *The Uncanny* (1919) (Masco *The Nuclear Borderlands*), Masco's work infuses the entire cabinet with a two-fold haunting of the fusion of nuclear weapons and industrial capital. Firstly, *Plowshare* incites a sensory experience of distrust far from the project of "security" that it was expected to develop for it reminds us that our moment in history is indelibly linked to this "revolutionary moment of industrialism and nuclear-powered nationalism" (Masco "

The Age of Man"); secondly, the industrial complex's "future-perfect version of nuclear science" ("The Age of Man") is seen as embodying the rhetorical mask that veils the unprecedented alteration of the biosphere. Reanimating this moment in history ensures not only that nuclear testing is not lost in the collective consciousness; the synthesis of static film as object and the cabinet's dynamic relationship to the history of museology evokes the absence of the taboo subject and material reality of a synecdoche for climate change action: the presence of our nuclear past, its pollution and waste, and their futures.

Tombstones

Brexiteers, the pro-Trident renewal camp, and the rushed sense of energy needs of the present calculated at cost over those needs of the future: all positions that require clarification of the state of being strikingly different from the past. They aim to negate the ethics of the centuries that came before us. Our now, they cry, is determined in a way that the past is not. Determinate negation is reliant upon contrast.

Fig. 10. Nuclear Sail by Ian Hamilton Finlay. Photograph. Andrew Lawson (by courtesy of the Estate of Ian Hamilton Finlay). *Littlesparta.org.uk.* Web. 9 May, 2017.

Nuclear Sail by Ian Hamilton Finlay is presented within a five-acre garden of poetic violence: Little Sparta, Dunsyre, just outside the Scottish capital, Edinburgh (Fig. 10, above). The "menacing presence" of the replica of a submarine conning tower reminds us that there is an aesthetic to fascism that can be placed within an unsuspecting scene of tranquility. For Drew Milne, Finlay's sense of play represents "the unnatural history of aesthetic domination through a transhistorical classicism, a mode of Eurocentric internationalism whose faith in aesthetic clarity is satirical, objective and anti-romantic in tendency" (Milne). Such monumental objectivity—a failed identification of stonework and nuclear violence—reminds us of cold-blooded rationalism that leaves a bad taste in the mouth during these pressing times. As Robert Pogue Harrison notes when reading A.R. Ammons, "the grave marker is the first place marker. Only death in its abysmal finality has power and authority enough to bound and localize space in its memorial" (Harrison):

> the things of earth are not objects
> there is no nature, no nature of stones and brooks, stumps, and ditches,
>
> for these are pools of energy cooled into place,
> or they are starlight pressed
> to store,
> or they are speeding light held still:
> the woods are a fire green-slow
> and the pathway of solid earthwork
>
> is just light concentrated blind (Ammons "Tombstones" 50).

Cooled stillness, at first, might not bring to mind nuclear power or nuclear arms. The pathway from pools of energy to our sense of light offers not incommensurable ontologies but invokes a sense of kinship in the common experience of motion that negates surface, difference, alterity; we could take our emotions for the world dying beautifully to this inclusive sense of motion. Harrison asks an apposite question: "What would the history of civilizations amount to without stone to outlast this human time of ours, which moves too rapidly for us (168)?" Drew Milne understands Finlay's work within the politics of the division of labour in the domination of nature: Finlay's "dialectical images in sculptural form" suggest to Milne "the profound ambivalence of neoclassical pastoral as a forerunner of the aesthetic violence of modernity" (Milne). Human reliance on the world for its material is something that connects the labour movement and the environmental movement as Marx understood.[21] More pressing in terms of understanding matter over materiality, Timothy Morton indirectly responds to Harrison's reflection on interdependency and finitude as raised by Ammons:

> We may need to think bigger than totality itself, if totality means something closed, something we can be sure of, something that remains the same. It may be harder to imagine four and a half billion years than abstract eternity. It may be harder to imagine evolution than abstract infinity. It's a little humiliating. This "concrete" infinity directly confronts us in the actuality of life on Earth. Facing it is one of the profound tasks to which the ecological thought summons us (Morton *The Ecological Thought*).

The only "us" that exists in the present participle, as Hugh MacDiarmid understood, is energy over time.[22] We need such alternative forms of determinate negation to our security-conscious collectivities now more than ever.

In conclusion

The debates on reinvestment in nuclear warheads and nuclear power throughout July and August of 2016 in the UK parliament outlined the dialectic between the particular and the universal, which construed the universal sentiment of world peace and denied this in terms of security. Membership of NATO and commitments to multilateral disarmament were understood as joint issues rendered within a productive intersection of the structuring imperatives of capitalism in the new world order of 1945 and the contingency of its particular historical manifestations. In this terrible summer of death and division, rhetoric on immigration yielded a shadow over the value of free movement of labour and placed UK politics within the genre of the cold war, in turn conflating the development of international relations with geopolitics of energy production with obscure results. We lost our sense of community.

The echoes of mid-twentieth century politics and debate –infused with paranoia that the next world war would be nuclear could be heard in the country's outlook during a chaotic moment in Europe and further abroad in the summer of 2016. While the first wave of nuclear anxiety and fear was not delusion but rational, for nuclear war was highly likely, cultural emotions during this more recent phase were amplified by an abortive military coup in Istanbul, the attack in Baton Rouge during peaceful protest following police killings of black citizens, and the Nice terror attack on Bastille Day. The commonality across these terrible events is hard to draw; a generalisation might suggest that these nations were in shock and the media rolled out news with little sophisticated editorial on militarized police tactics, the authority to deploy troops, and the ongoing debates on the contexts in which nuclear arms might or might not be used.

This did not help the public to engage critically with parliamentary discourse. A lone voice, holding ground like a stone, was lost amidst the thunder:

> We are debating not a nuclear deterrent but our continued possession of weapons of mass destruction…
>
> What, then, is the threat that we face that will be deterred by the death of more than 1 million people? It is not the threat from so-called Islamic State, with its poisonous death-cult that glories in killing as many people as possible, as we have seen brutally from Syria to east Africa and from France to Turkey. It has not deterred our allies Saudi Arabia from committing dreadful acts in Yemen. It did not stop Saddam Hussein's atrocities in the 1980s or the invasion of Kuwait in 1990. It did not deter the war crimes in the Balkans in the 1990s, nor the genocide in Rwanda. I make it clear today that I would not take a decision that killed millions of innocent people (UK Parliament, "UK's Nuclear Deterrent").

Calibrating more-than-human action within localised events that are the manifestations of broader timescapes and global interdependencies across ecologies and bioregions necessarily involves a view on the historical records of our culture alongside our deep history as species. The present "us" is arising from an immanent plane of life and from within a multitude of differentiated planetary emergences. Here, what we view as "history" is no longer radically different from nature for our agency has shaped nature as nature has shaped us; we witness the "collapse of the age-old humanist distinction between natural history and human history" (Chakrabarty 201) giving rise to a new "we". And yet, the fear generated by "the lack of caution and knowledge that has characterized much of the nuclear age" (Perrine) manages to outstrip the sustainable "us" of the long-term view embodied in renewables, the inherent limits of peace.

Notes

[1] Tom Bristow, English Studies, Durham University, Hallgarth House, Durham City, DH1 3AY. english.studies@durham.ac.uk.

[2] The EU referendum was held on 23 June, 2016. The first reading of the Private Member's Bill, sponsored by Baroness Falkner of Margravine, 24 May, 2016; second reading on 5 July, 2016. Iraq Inquiry a.k.a. Chilcot, 6 July. There are ten stages to the passing of a bill (five stages in each of the houses); at the time of writing, the date for the committee stage (third stage) was yet to be announced ("Armed Forces Deployment"; "Iraq Inquiry").

[3] Margaret the virgin (Margaret of Antioch) is known as Saint Marina the Great Martyr in the east, is thus associated with the sea, and consequently linked to Aphrodite (GK 'aphros' meaning 'sea-foam'). St Dunstan installed a community of Benedictine monks there more than one thousand years before the current parliamentary session.

[4] Perhaps it would be too daring or fanciful to have named this court after the Star Chamber that sat at the Palace of Westminster throughout the sixteenth century, an efficient court under the Plantagenets and Tudors. The "Supreme Court" is a name that

seems to intentionally conflate American and British justice systems leading to confusion. When the reconfiguration of Britain's constitution inhabits this mode of British-American relations, the apparent self-election into the role of 'Airstrip One' as George Orwell would put it in *1984*, belies the fact that a recent trend recent in British politics aspires to a model of British justice having more in common with the American system than with Europe. Inherited from Roman law across the continent, British justice from the medieval period onwards contends with English remoteness and inhabits a resource-starved pragmatic approach to things, a spirit of governance that evolves into the law of precedent in the United States.

[5] Claire Mills and Oliver Hawkins, "Replacing the UK's 'Trident' Nuclear Deterrent." Commons Briefing Paper CBP-7353. Trident is housed at Clyde Naval base on the west coast of Scotland; Faslane was first constructed and used in the second world war, the bastion considered a useful geographic location during the Cold War. The Scottish National Party and Scottish Labour Party do not want continued deployment of Trident at Clyde.

[6] Trident Ploughshares occupied Westminster Parliamentary lobby from 16:00 to 22:15.

[7] Lord Whitty is good on what our political leaders were doing during the stock drop: "My noble friend Lord Radice said that in effect we have no government in this country at the moment, and no opposition, and he is right. To be slightly more facetious, on the Saturday after the referendum result, there was a point when the Prime Minister had resigned, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had gone AWOL, the leader of the Opposition was pronounced officially to be in bed and the then-assumed next Prime Minister was playing cricket, while sterling was already falling and the prospects for the markets were already appallingly facing us. The Government need to get their act together and so does this House" ("Outcome of the European Union Referendum").

[8] Of these transactions, one third are Euro denominated. Businesses desire trading on the same platform, so Britain's loss of Euro clearing would trigger the loss of Dollar clearing, thus extracting a substantial amount of liquidity in the market, which trickles into the funding of public services.

[9] It is one of three representations of humanitarian figures: Ghandi, Mandela, Lincoln – with the exception of former Prime Minister of South Africa, Jan Smuts, all others are male UK parliamentarians.

[10] The people of Manchester met on New Year's Eve, 1862; their letter is dated January 1, 1863, the same date as Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation that changed the status of more than three million enslaved people in ten states, from "slave" to "free". The Peterloo Massacre of 1819 and the "Lancashire Cotton Famine" (1861-65) historically parenthesize the writing of The Communist Manifesto (1848) and place the world's first industrialized city in the forefront of British social history.

[11] The phrase is inscribed in the Manchester monument. Written by Lincoln little more than two weeks after the Manchester letter was posted via the American Embassy, and submitted to the President by his Secretary of State, William H. Seward via Charles Francis Adams, United States Minister to the United Kingdom, during the Christmas period at the centre of the Civil War; in which time Lincoln's suffocating political embattlement raised to enlist the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution incredibly allowed time for a clear head and good prose.

[12] This term for scaremongering amongst pro-unionists was first used during the 2014 Scottish independence referendum and was apposite for the tactics of the 2016 EU referendum.

[13] This question was presumably put to the Secretary of State for Defence, Mr Phillip Hammond. This role was occupied by Churchill throughout 1940-45 and 1951-52, while Prime Minister on both occasions. Hammond was replaced by Michael Fallon on the day after Buscombe asked the question during May's first cabinet reshuffle.

[14] Lord Sterling of Plaistow argued for the importance of an observation made by Lord Ramsbottom: "Until 2010, the capital cost of our nuclear deterrent was carried by the Treasury. It was put on the Ministry of Defence's account only some five or six years ago" (UK Parliament, "Defence: Continuous At-Sea Deterrent").

[15] The UK built the world's first industrial-scale nuclear power station (the first of four Magnox reactors) in Cumbria (Calder Hall) in 1956 from machine tools develop for the military during World War II, but now lacks the skills and investment to develop Hinkley Point C. At Calder Hall, leaked radioactive waste was discovered in 2005; the reactors were closed on December 30, 2015; it will take one hundred years to fully decommission the plant.

[16] The McCoys' song was recorded by Bowie in France, 1973; it featured in John Cusack's film *War, Inc.,* 2008.

[17] [Cameron quits: BBC investigative report into dispute between pro-Cameron and pro-May MPs – 11 Sept]

[18] For world trends (1980-2014), see the following sources:
http://www.tsp-data-portal.org/Breakdown-of-Electricity-Generation-by-Energy-Source#tspQvChart
http://unstats.un.org/unsd/energy/balance/

[19] The synthesis of sciences of mind and nature in Bateson (491) and Ingold, suggests different degrees of socio-biology deriving from E.O. Wilson and the notion of a creative advance into novelty in A.N. Whitehead yet all emphasize the organism as the embodiment of a life process within a holistic topological field.

[20] The website is run by Climate Communication Fellow, Dr John Cook, Global Change Institute, University of Queensland.

[21] "Nature is just as much the source of use values (and it is surely of such that material wealth consists!) as labour, which itself is only the manifestation of a force of nature, human labour power". *Critique of the Gotha Programme* – letter to the Social Democratic Workers' Party of Germany, May 1875.

[22] MacDiarmid's "On A Raised Beach" opens with the statement that "All is lithogenesis" to outline the relationship between stone and writing that transports the reader into the most incredible lexicon.

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